

Language

PRACTITIONERS of new sciences normally have difficulty in defining their concepts. Social scientists do agree that their basic field of study concerns man. There is no little disagreement, however, as to what is strictly human in contrast with the simian. The physical anthropologist, visiting the zoological gardens with his students, is compelled to admit that the differences between himself and the chimpanzee are differences only in degree and perhaps in their relative positions with reference to the bars of the cage. The ethno-psychologist has an even more modest report regarding what used to be called the "mind." The reflexes of both mature man and the adult ape have been conditioned into those attitudes which individual men often call their "thinking," and they are conditioned in the same way. Scholars such as Leslie White insist, however, that the invention and manipulation of symbols is the sole possession of humanity, and that this is a real difference in kind. The author agrees with this school in designating the symbol as the supreme and perhaps only man-making phenomenon. He agrees that if behavior is not symbolic behavior, it is not human but animal behavior, even though human beings indulge in it. He acknowledges, however, that the scholars who think otherwise are neither few nor undistinguished.

All culture is symbolic, then, though few appreciate the extreme intellectuality of language, even when spoken by the illiterate. It helps little to realize that apes have the same vocal cords as men and that they make them resonant in the same way. This fact pales before the realization that even a simple word is a symbol of a symbol, a deep intellectual abstraction. We are familiar with the simple garden spade, and we seldom think of this simple tool as a symbol. The abstract character of the tool is borne upon us when

we exhibit it to an Australian aborigine who has never seen one and cannot appreciate its use. Spades are simple to us because our reflexes have been conditioned with reference to them at so early an age that it is very unlikely that any present reader will remember when he became aware of spades. The great monuments of Peru and Middle America were made without spades, however. Man did not come by this concept easily or early in his prehistory. It is not derived from nature, although it might have been suggested by the human fingernail or a simple wooden stick. The word "spade" which symbolizes this material symbol is far more abstract, for however hard the older linguists tried, they could not derive the semantic, or "meaning," elements of language from natural sounds.

Recognition of the importance of speech in human relations has led some theorists to describe language as a social institution. That language is the most important technique of human interaction, and that, as such, it is fundamental to all but the simplest human relationships is something that few would care to challenge. Yet the writer has never been convinced that language is an institution. This work is not an appropriate place to defend his position, but he is entitled here to state it.

Language is to him a technique, and more, a ritual technique. Social scientists are largely agreed that institutions operate through rituals. The position taken here is that language is a ritual technique common to all institutions within a society. Furthermore, it is maintained that members of all groups and institutions who understand each other are somehow members of a particular society, in contrast with those who do not so understand. True, there are class dialects, trade talk, professional technical language—scientific at one extreme and criminal at another—which mark off subsocieties; but members of different subsocieties who are able to interact linguistically are also members of some larger society. To denominate language as an institution is tantamount to making it the over-all institution of institutions, an institution of social control whose compulsive power would make that of the state pale into insignificance. Language, rather, is like mathematics, which indeed is the most completely abstract of all languages. Mathematics is not a science itself, but is the basic ritual technique of all sciences, so that no branch of learning can properly be called a science unless

it can express itself mathematically. Language is similarly, among other things, the ritual technique which is as much a *sine qua non* of institutions as mathematics is of science.

Language, a culture complex in itself, is thus the technique by which all other culture complexes are transmitted and through which they must operate. It is the symbolization of the symbol, the essential system of symbolics by which all the rest of the culture is rendered abstract and therefore made comprehensible to all men in a society, who otherwise would be confined to trying to express their subjective mental states.

Walloon culture, like all others, is symbolized by a language system. These talkative folk, loving to express themselves and to hear others indulge in oratory, verbal humor, theatrical performances, and ceremonies, are not "strong, silent folk." They are strong but voluble, and the Condrusian is the most voluble of them all. So, as one sits in the smoking car of the vicinal railroad, rocking and jolting from Val St. Lambert toward the edge of the Ardennes, he muses about this symbolic system that he hears interspersed with the easily identified grammar school French and occasional sentence of Flemish. He knows, if he has properly prepared himself by loitering around the little shops and markets of the Outre-Meuse district, by lingering around the grammar schools in Liege when the children are released and listening to their games, and by consulting the dialectologists of the University of Liege, that he is hearing not a patois but the remnants of a noble dialect, almost a language in itself, the Walloon speech of a great and literate history.

One must assume in this brief outline of Walloon phonetics that the reader understands standard French pronunciation. It would be better to use the international phonetic alphabet here were these pages to be read only by professional linguists, but this will not be the case, and ordinary French orthography will reach more people. Written literary Walloon actually uses French characters, with the following modifications which have been outlined by the scholars of the Museum of Walloon Life, and are recommended by them for everyday use: ¹

Beginning with consonants, the really important phonemes of a language, and in case of Walloon the easiest, one finds that *b*, *p*;

¹ *L'Orthographie Wallonne* ("Editions de Musée de la Vie Wallonne" [Liege, 1948]).

d, t; f, v; l, r; m, n; j, ch; s, z; c, g, gu, gn have the same value as in French. One never uses the combinations *ph* or *th*, however, and no *x* as we pronounce it.² For the last, one writes *gz* or *cs*, as these sounds are very clear in Walloon: *po egzimpe* for *pour example*, and *ficser* for *fixer*. Furthermore, one ordinarily writes *k* when he means the stop represented by the first letter in English *kettle*. The letter *c* is not used to represent this stop except before *e* and *i*. The symbols *q* and *qu* were not used in old Walloon, and are used today only in words recently borrowed from French. Liègeois Walloon uses *dj* and *tch* for *j* and *ch*, of which more later. Thus, one says *dji tchante* for *je chante*.

The letter *w* is never pronounced *v* in Walloon. The writer, trying to find his way back to his quarters in Namur during the war, asked for the direction of the Flawinne Barracks, pronouncing the *w* like *v*, and was testily informed by a Namurois that the Belgians had both sounds in their language and knew them apart, even if the French did not. This is likewise true of *h*. This is always aspirate in Walloon. Thus, the name for the city of Huy sounds more like the English *whew* than *we*. If an *h* is written, pronounce it. If it is not pronounced, do not write it. Thus, one writes *in-ome* for *un homme*. To do so, perhaps, is being conservative and very correct, but one must, on the other hand, admit that the Walloon use of *dèl* for *de l'* and *al* for *à l'* before consonants is one of their particular contributions to lip-laziness.

The Walloons never write double consonants unless they intend to pronounce them. Thus, the French write *sonner* (Walloon *saigner*) and pronounce only the one *n*. The writer heard an educated person in Château-Gérard, reading from one of his Paris-published books, very carefully pronounce the word *son-ner*, which was somewhat amusing as the reader claimed not to speak Walloon and had just warned the writer not to pick up a Condrusian accent. Liègeois Walloon, however, is fond of double consonant sounds. However, it dislikes the French *ll* which is pronounced almost like the English consonant *y*. This phoneme is pronounced either *ly* or simply *l*: thus, *consèlyer* or *consèlier* for French *conseiller*.

As for vowels, *a, eu, i, o, u, ou* are the same short sounds they are in French, pronounced a little shorter, if anything. When meant

² The letter *x* in combination with *h* is very common in old place and family names, but the phoneme *xh* is pronounced almost like English *h*.

to be pronounced long, one writes them *â, êu, î, ô, ôu*, and pronounces them much longer than in French. Indeed, the standard French *â* is not always clearly heard by an American, but a Condrusian, speaking standard French, practically shouts his circumflexes at you. Furthermore, real Walloon says *ô* very plainly for French *au* and *eau*.

One never pronounces an unaccented *e*, and one never writes *e* for *è*, which latter phoneme is pronounced much shorter and sharper than in France. Thus one does not say *mes, est, les*, but *mès, èst, and lès*.

The above represents some of the commonest and most obvious phonemic differences between Walloon French and Parisian French. The pitfall one must avoid at this juncture is commonplace enough. This is the assumption of the economic, social, military, and hence cultural victors that the speech of the losers is a patois—a “brogue,” to use the favorite term of uneducated American northerners in describing “southern” speech, and of Parisians in speaking of Walloon. Being a brogue or patois, such speech must therefore represent degeneration of the “pure” or official speech. The fact that a local dialect might possibly represent an older and, according to the mentality of its critics, a “purer” form rarely occurs to any but professional linguists.

That French is really the modern form of Latin, influenced by both the Celtic of Roman Gaul and the speech of the Germanic invaders, has been mentioned before, but Walloon has claim at least as equal to be so considered. Comparative linguists agree on the inevitability of linguistic change; and, according to Edward Sapir at least, phonetic rather than semantic and grammatic change is the core of linguistic change.³ The real core of speech is sound, anyhow; and grammar and syntax are matters of organization. Now certainly before the appearance of standardizing inventions such as the printing press, radio, and other means of rapid communication—and perhaps even after—it can hardly be expected that phonetic change should be consistent over the large areas of the map that so many languages occupy. Standard French and Walloon no doubt were caught in the same grand phonetic drifts, but there were certainly minor ones peculiar to Austrasia, on the one hand, and of Nulla Francia on the other. Walloon is, then, no broken-

³ Edward Sapir, *Language* (New York, 1921).

down standard French but, in its classic form, is just as old and as valid a dialect as the court language of French kings, almost always being as close to the basic Latin, and often closer.

The following examples can be duplicated in less than an hour with many hundreds more by using an English-French and a French-Liègeois dictionary.

Beginning with the consonants, one observes that Walloon uses *tch* and *dj* where standard French says *ch*, *j*, and *g*. Both of these are drifts away from the original Latin, but the harder Walloon is nearer the early changed Latin as produced by the Frankish invasion, and may be the form once used by all French-speaking Franks. France, that is, the Ile de France, became involved in a softening drift in later centuries. Thus:

LATIN	WALLOON	FRENCH
<i>tene</i> (hold!)	<i>tchiens</i>	<i>tiens</i>
<i>castellum</i> (castle)	<i>tchèstê</i>	<i>château</i>
<i>juvens</i> (young)	<i>djonne</i>	<i>jeune</i>
<i>Legia</i> (Liege)	<i>Lidj</i>	<i>Liège</i> or <i>Liége</i>

Old Neustria, at least the Norman remnant, including that portion imported into Louisiana by the Acadians, still uses the *tch* phoneme, to the disapproval of Nulla Francia. It is amusing to hear highly educated and very precise French-speaking Walloons use the native *tchiens* when they have apparently dropped all else.

The Latin initiatives *st-*, *str-*, *sp-*, *sc-*, *scr-*, etc., are better preserved in Walloon than in French. Thus:

LATIN	WALLOON	FRENCH
<i>stella</i> (star)	<i>steûle</i>	<i>étoile</i>
<i>stringere</i> (to clasp)	<i>strinde</i>	<i>êtreindre</i>
<i>spissus</i> (thick)	<i>spès</i>	<i>épais</i>
<i>schola</i> (school)	<i>scole</i>	<i>école</i>
<i>scrinium</i> (casket)	<i>scrin</i>	<i>écrin</i>

A test word count was made sufficient to convince the writer that this arrested drift is noticeable in the majority of Walloon words beginning with these initiatives.

Parisian French was likewise subject to a phonetic drift which inserted the intercalary stops *b*, *d*, *t*, into the Latin originals and which did not affect Walloon uniformly. The following list is from the publications of the Museum of Walloon Life:

LATIN	WALLOON	FRENCH
<i>tener</i> (tender)	<i>tinre</i>	<i>tendre</i>
<i>cinis, cineris</i> (ash)	<i>cènes</i>	<i>cendre</i>
<i>consuere</i> (Low Latin, <i>cusire</i>) (to sew)	<i>keûse</i>	<i>coudre</i>
<i>pulver</i> (powder)	<i>poûre</i>	<i>poudre</i>
<i>simulare</i> (to seem)	<i>sonler</i>	<i>sembler</i>
<i>tremere</i> (to tremble)	<i>tronler</i>	<i>trembler</i>
<i>insimul</i> (together)	<i>èssonle</i>	<i>ensemble</i>

My own exploratory word count, however, leads to a strong suspicion that Walloon *generally* followed the same drift regarding these stops as French. For example, were it consistent, one should find that the Latin *camera* (room) would be *tchamre* in Walloon instead of *tchambe*, which is very close to the French *chambre*.

Very little inspection of the language will reveal that Walloon has in many instances been more conservative of the Germanic, or Frankish, phonetics than French. The *w* phoneme has to all intents dropped out of Parisian French, for the semi-vowel *ou* is not the same sound. Yet it is a common sound in a large number of Walloon place names—such as *Waremmes*, *Flawinne*, etc.—and is pronounced as it is in English. Indeed, it is taught in the state schools as standard French, the Parisian pronunciation of *w* as the English *v* is considered lip-laziness, as noted before. In fact, the retention of the *w* in *Walloon*, which French has changed to *g*, identifies our people.

One must note here, however, that the French have done little more damage to the tribal name than have the Anglo-Saxons. One should always say "Wallon," as even the French do, and not say "Walloon," as do the English. One might as well say "Teutoon" for a German. This Flemish ending has led such narrowly traveled and partly educated writers as Sir Walter Scott to describe the population of the city of Liege as Flemings and to describe them (of all people!) as stolidly Flemish in character. Besides, the Flemish *oo* is pronounced like an English long *o*, as in *Roosevelt*.

The fact is that the Walloons have conserved the Germanic phonetics of their enemies more than have the French, who are far more akin to the Franks. The Germans who lived against the northern Celts, or Belgae, referred to them as *Wallah* (foreigner, or outlander). For reasons not known to the writer, this name stuck

for all Celts. Note that Wales-Welsh is a name for the Celts which the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and such people, gave to those Celts whom they could not destroy but drove into west Britain. Indeed, educated Walloons who have traveled in the British Isles will often refer to themselves as Welsh when speaking to an Englishman or American. The fact that the word *Gael* begins with a *g* instead of a *w* is not a contradiction, for it comes from the Celtic *Goidel* and not from *Wall*, *Wallah*. Neither is *Galli* a contradiction; for although Caesar says in the first chapter of the *Gallic War* that they called themselves *Celti* and that *Galli* was the Roman word, the latter was probably a Roman attempt at either *Wallah* or *Celti*. The Romans had no character for *w* and did not hear it or *c* or *g* very clearly; Caesar's contemporaries called him *Caius* in one place and *Gaius* in another. Modern French refers to the Celts as Gaulois and the land of Wales as *Galles*, shifting the Teutonic *w* to *g*, which can be noticed in hundreds of words. Thus:

GERMANIC	WALLOON	FRENCH
<i>Walther</i> (Walter)	<i>Wati</i> (Condroz)	<i>Gautier</i>
<i>Wilhelm</i> (William)	<i>Wiyame</i>	<i>Guillaume</i>
<i>wafel</i> or <i>wafl</i> (OLG)		
(waffle, or wafer)	<i>wafe</i>	<i>gaufre</i>
<i>warjan</i> (OHG) (to cure)	<i>ri-weri</i>	<i>guérir</i>
<i>wardon</i> (OHG) (to guard)	<i>warden</i>	<i>garder</i>

The intention of the foregoing is to indicate that Walloon is basically more conservative of Latin and, to a lesser degree, of Frankish—which, in general, is correct. It would not be correct, however, to fail to indicate that Walloon has been subject through the centuries to its own phonetic drifts, which have not influenced Parisian French. Occasionally these drifts have been more destructive of Latin than those of France with reference to the same phonemes. Thus, French has kept closer to Latin in its final consonants *-dre*, *-tre*, *-rde*, *-rte*, *-rdre*, *-cte*, *-ste*, *-stre*, *-res*, which Walloon has greatly simplified. Thus:

LATIN	FRENCH	WALLOON
<i>perdere</i> (to lose)	<i>perdre</i>	<i>piède</i>
<i>perdita</i> (lost)	<i>perte</i>	<i>piète</i>
<i>vendere</i> (to sell)	<i>vendre</i>	<i>vinde</i>
<i>porta</i> (door)	<i>porte</i>	<i>pwète</i>
		(neologism?)

LATIN	FRENCH	WALLOON
<i>actum</i> (deed)	<i>acte</i>	<i>ake</i>
<i>pactum</i> (pact)	<i>pacte</i>	<i>pake</i>
<i>bursa</i> (purse)	<i>bourse</i>	<i>boûsse</i>
<i>cursus</i> (current, course)	<i>course</i>	<i>coûsse</i>

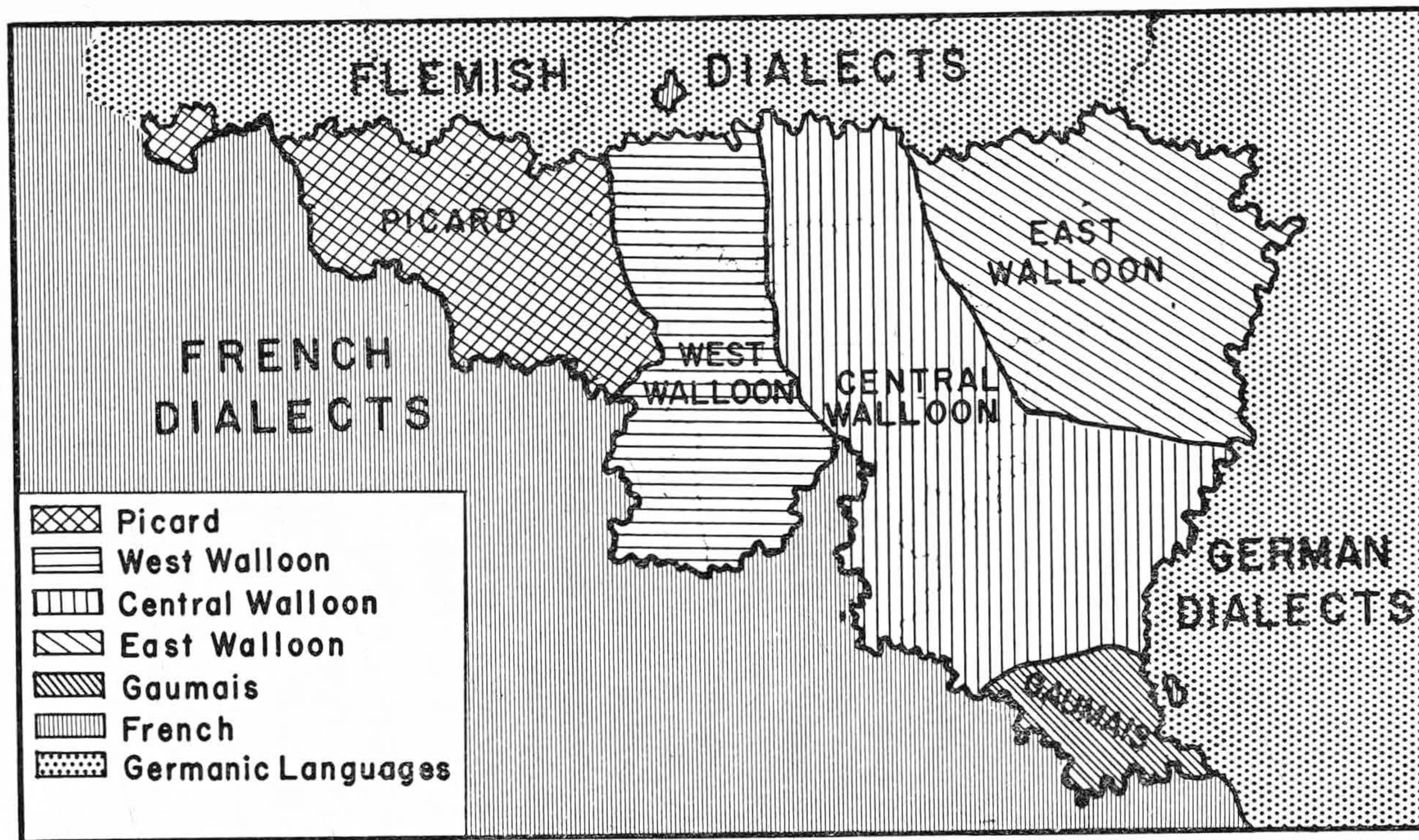
In some words, by contrast, one dialect seems to be about as conservative as the other. Thus:

LATIN	FRENCH	WALLOON
<i>bestia</i> (beast)	<i>bête</i>	<i>bièsse</i>
<i>festum</i> (feast)	<i>fête</i>	<i>fièsse</i>
<i>fenestra</i> (window)	<i>fenêtre</i>	<i>finièsse</i>
<i>esse</i> (Low Latin, <i>essere</i>) (to be)	<i>être</i>	<i>èsse</i>

The study of the vocabulary elements of a language is as revealing as its phonetics. For example, in counting, Walloon follows Latin more closely than French, which retained the Celtic system after reaching 69. Thus, French says *soixante-dix* (sixty-and-ten) for 70, while the Walloon considers this an affectation and says *septante*. The Walloon also says *nonante* for 90 instead of *quatre-vingt-dix* (four-twenties-and-ten); and occasionally, though not consistently, he says *octante* for 80 instead of *quatre-vingt*. The Germanic loan-word for the communal mayor, *bourgmestre*, is not used in ordinary speech, for one hears more often the Walloon *mayêur*, which is as conservative of Latin as is the French *maire*. For that matter, the Germanic word properly adapted to Walloon is *bourguimêsse*, which is considered both official and more polite.

The Walloons of Liege, who often blend Parisian French and Walloon into something unrecognizable as either, are more tolerant of neologisms than the country folk, of which more later. One also finds many words in Condroz which have dropped completely from Liègeois and hence are considered archaisms in the Walloon cultural capital, and he finds more of such archaisms, if such they be, in the deeper Ardennes than in Condroz. The rural vocabulary is also full of words common to French and Walloon in the eighteenth century which have since dropped from French.

We are now prepared to define Walloon as a language, or rather as the dialect of a great language area. It is the correct name for the Roman dialect of most French-speaking Belgium. The exceptions to this are Picard and Gaumais. The French of west Hainault



THE FIVE DIALECT AREAS OF WALLONIA

Picard is the same as the speech of Picardy in the French Republic, and is not properly called Walloon. Gaumais is about the same as the speech of the Reims region of France and is not Walloon either. True Walloon is West Walloon, Central Walloon, and East Walloon. The old speech of Château-Gérard is East Walloon.

(Map according to the Museum of Walloon Life, Liege)

and southern Brabant—that is, west of the line Thuin-Charleroi-Genappes-Waterloo—is often mistakenly called Walloon but is actually Picard, for it is the same speech as that of Picardy in the French Republic. Gaumais is a French dialect spoken in a tiny corner of the south of Luxembourg Province, Belgium (not the grand duchy), and is the French of Lorraine and not Walloon. Remacle says it is Champenois, or the French of the Reims region. In popular speech, a Walloon is any French-speaking Belgian, in contrast with the Teutonic-speaking Fleming and the German-speakers in the Eupen-Malmédy region. Actually, Walloon speech is the French clearly marked by the phonetics characteristic of the old Principality of Liege, the old sovereign county of Namur, and Luxembourg province, less the Gaumais enclave and some 1,200 inhabitants of the canton of Malmédy.

One could hardly call the Walloon dialect a “patois” during the centuries when it was the official language of the School of Liege, later the University, which antedates that of Paris. It could hardly be called a “brogue” during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when a high literature was written in it. Indeed, it may be that Vrindts, whom thousands of far from decrepit Liègeois remember in flesh, was the greatest of all recent poets writing in Walloon, in spite of his Flemish name. That the court of the Counts of Paris became greater than that of the Princes of Liege is an historical accident, and there is no such thing as a “correct” dialect unless the king and his armed servants say so.

In spite of Parisian ethnocentrism and the ridicule of the cabaret stage, the Walloons do not speak a broken-down French mixed with German, sprinkled with archaisms. Walloon is, or was, a dialect as old, as legitimate, and as equally sprung from the Franco-Celtic modifications of Latin as that Parisian which often considers itself Walloon’s illegitimate parent.

While recognizing all this, however, one must say that Walloon is a dying dialect if not a dead one. This is the well-considered and well-substantiated opinion of the dialectologists of the universities, although the reasons proffered here for its decline are denied by them. The present writer foresees an immediate fate worse than death confronting Walloon in all parts of the old princely diocese of Liege—namely, the vulgarization of noble Walloon into a true patois. This opinion remains hypothetical largely, although it is

far from lacking substantiating evidence. The writer received the suggestion from Lt. Col. Robert Gathy, Royal Belgian Artillery, whose Walloon proficiency is more than fair, and whose father speaks fluently the literary Walloon of the opening of the century. Colonel Gathy's hypothesis for the death of Walloon is its loss of an elite, the loss of its educated and leisure classes. Gathy was reared in Outre-Meuse, the most intensely Walloon district of Liege city, and his playground speech was the Walloon of children. He nevertheless cannot completely understand his father's declaiming of the verses of Vrindts. The one family's experience is typical and symbolic—at least, the writer is so convinced. The evidence, if not conclusive, is somewhat more than convincing.

The point to recall is that dialect is three dimensional instead of having only length and breadth; that is, it has more than mere regional or geographical validity. Everyone is aware that social stratification produces difference in speech. It is one of the tasks of the comparative linguist to make this common knowledge precise. That alterations in the class structure might account for the death of a dialect, that changes in the patterns of dominance, or that shifts of intellectual allegiance on the part of a native elite might convert a hitherto valid regional dialect into a lower class patois are such obvious possibilities that one wonders why more has not been made of it.

Let us, then, review some of the present theory regarding social classes in order to clarify this dialectological discussion.

It is rather generally agreed that division of labor and expanding culture produce specialists who, organizing their lives around their respective jobs, produce groups, sets, or pluralities. The limiting of social interaction inherent in job specialization will produce differences in speech. Moreover, in such work groups there is the necessity of referring to objects in their technologies with the precision required by effective teamwork, and this requirement will produce subvocabularies not well understood outside such groups. A work gang of unskilled laborers may use a craft dialect of grammatic looseness, with a small vocabulary and with little semantic versatility, but this craft dialect may require great phonetic agreement in order to get the work done.

Crafts like law and commerce, by contrast, dealing as they do with contracts, require great grammatic precision, even greater than has

been attained, as their perennial litigation reveals. The rise of theology, philosophy, and science requires even more grammatical and semantic accuracy, for abstractions, in themselves hard to understand, are introduced into speech. Certainly this is true of science. A study aspiring to that status must first become a language or dialect before it can become anything else. The increasing complexity of economic production will likewise develop an executive set, with resulting greater precision in language centering around its own role; for even though the terminating, or obeying, sets may themselves enjoy linguistic poverty, those who direct them cannot afford it. Since the executive set must get work out of its subordinates, it must be precisely understood. Administration has an even harder job, for its role in life is to stabilize and organize the various departments of an institution which grow up around specialists. The administration must be understood by all the specialized departments despite their individual job dialect. In addition, if a society is economically successful enough to produce a leisure class, the fine arts—in contrast with folk arts—demand still further precision of the regional speech.

Social scientists are rather generally in agreement that these job specialties will be rated differently in economic return, or in status, or in both. It can likewise be expected that class consciousness will grow up around the most important part of the symbolic life of a functional group—the requirements of bread and butter, the technologies by which they are obtained, and a loyalty to fellow workers. This includes loyalty to the speech which symbolizes these things. The “lower” classes are not conditioned to respond to the symbols of the directing classes except with regard to the job itself, and hence are hostile to those symbols. Symbols, including verbal symbols, operate in the context of a situation which, in a complex society, is almost always a class situation. A social group responds only to words which have “meaning,” the power to evoke action. One may doubt if stratification of a local language often produces separate class dialects, for all classes usually understand each other when they want to; but such differences are still very real. A lower class can develop its craft speech into a slang—a deliberate attempt to keep outsiders from understanding; and an elite, by making itself almost linguistically incomprehensible, can sterilize itself by removing itself rather completely from the basic economic life on which it lives. Such separation produces confusion and ill-feeling

and is a good index that such a social system is due for a change. A social system, among other things, is a system of classes in equilibrium, each able to predict the other's behavior by the use of symbols in sound, and each aware and appreciative of the role of the others. Disintegration and decadence result from any other situation.

The intolerance for out-group dialect is too often ignored or minimized, a fact which is difficult to understand since most social interaction, and hence sympathy, is expressed by verbal symbols. People accept foreigners with an entirely different language because they are admitted to be strange; dialect differences, by contrast, either symbolize past economic, and often military, struggles or latent class conflict between supposedly unified peoples. The behavior least harmful to unity produced by such dialect differences is laughter and ridicule, although ridicule is often less forgivable than outright opposition. It may be true that on the senior officer level during the recent war southerners and northerners from the United States liked each other, but it is certainly no secret that the less educated and less traveled of the lower ranks did not. As this dislike was so often irrational, the suspicion arises that the readily appreciable dialect difference was the thing which, recalling over a century's history of opposition, brought mutual antagonism.

Similarly, British, French, Belgian, and German gentlemen—i. e., the *petite noblesse*—even when at war recognize and respect one another as belonging to the same originating class. And both the commercial and laboring classes can project their sympathy across a language barrier, while the intellectuals have for centuries been noted for their international republic of letters wherein nothing but the particular art or science seems to matter much. Understanding and forgiveness across a class dialect boundary is very hard, however, and especially hard across adjacent class lines: speech differences are often of slight importance when the true upper class, or gentry, associate with the unskilled or partly skilled laboring class, but neither forgives nor likes the intervening commercial classes until close association establishes them individually as persons of merit.

While Walloon in the mid-eighteenth century was a regional dialect of the great French family with far more class agreement on what was "correct" speech than obtained in France, and certainly more than in England, the present progress of Walloon to-

wards a lower-class dialect, and hence towards a true patois, nevertheless had its beginning then, despite its great hardness at the time. Strangely enough, it was the commercial classes who began it, and their defection is the less commendable since they were perhaps the freest bourgeoisie on the continent and once strong supporters of Walloon. Indeed, their opposition to the later prince-bishops expressed itself in hyper-Wallonism, since the bishops, largely foreigners, spoke court French and often attempted to suppress Walloon. Not only did they support the great eighteenth-century poets, who wrote in that language, but they also gathered at the Pont des Arches in Liege every Sunday to hear the itinerant minstrels sing in rural Walloon. Indeed, they did this until well into the twentieth century. But the ideology of the eighteenth-century commercial-class revolution, generated in France, was written in French; hence, the greater bourgeoisie not only accepted the Parisian French as their speech but encouraged and led the suppression of Walloon in the compulsory system of education, which they have dominated since the revolution. True, the humbler representatives of the commercial class in Château-Gérard understand Walloon, but only the older members speak it correctly.

The aristocratic classes might well have constituted a barrier to the flood of Parisian French when the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic War were over; but, for the most part, the native Walloon nobility was swept away. When the monarchy was restored and titles of nobility were once more legal, the landed estates had been sold to non-noble persons who often resold them to other titled families, who generally were not Walloons. That Monsieur le Baron is the only aristocrat with a Walloon name within a half-hour's drive from the Templars' church—the others being of German, Flemish, Italian, or Spanish origin—is merely an example of what occurred all over Wallonia. Walloon was left as the property of *petit bourgeois* and labor classes. Because the terminology of the Industrial Revolution is in Parisian French (the Walloon did not coin words to symbolize the material culture of the factory system) the local dialect will lose the proletariat as surely as it lost the bourgeoisie. The rapidly mechanizing farmers and peasants cannot hope to remain "provincial" enough to fight by themselves the influence of the public school.

The death blow to "noble" Walloon, however, is the loss of its old intellectual elite. The men of letters are the repositories of a

tradition, and their role demands that they pass it on to the next generation. What happens when they change their linguistic allegiance? The basic reason for the disappearance of noble Walloon letters is not a lack of native talent but a growing colonial attitude towards Paris. Even in the last century the Walloon-born literary lights Jean Le Maire and Camille Lemmonier wrote in Parisian, and only a few minor lights like Vrindts wrote in Walloon. It matters little to remind the world that if Charlemagne spoke French at all, it was the Liègeois *langue d'oïl* of Hérystal, or that Godfrey of Bouillon, the Ardennes fortress, commanded French knights in the crusades. All that is lost today.

Incidentally, Wallonia, a land of lost causes, has many parallels found in the region of the old Confederate States of America. One of them is the tendency to export intelligence to France, which is in many ways the "up north" of Wallonia. This flight towards presumed opportunity has done letters and leadership no good in either the American South or Wallonia. Nor is it a new movement in the latter region.

It matters little to point out that Wallonia produced the first historian in west Europe in Philippe de Commynes. He was a Francophile, wrote in Parisian, and ended up as the servant of Louis XI, the most effective enemy the Principality of Liege ever had. It is no longer important to point out that there was a school at Liege long before the founding of the University of Paris, as instruction in the modern University of Liege is given in Parisian, except for courses in dialectology. The distinction of this department is in itself, however, an index of the morbidity of the local language. Local recognition of one's own "quaintness" is the death rattle of any culture. It has not been necessary to develop a department of midwestern dialect at Chicago, although one in Acadian French might be expected at the University of Louisiana before this century is ended.

The ways of losing an elite are many. A conquest might kill them off, as happened in Celtic Britain during the Teutonic invasion. And it is significant that by gathering themselves into monasteries instead of living separately in parishes the Celtic clergy made the work of the Angles and Saxons easier. This did not happen in Wallonia; for, though the Germans tried hard enough in the early part of the past decade, their occupation was not long enough. As

I have pointed out elsewhere, the fact that modern Kutenaiian has become grammatically simple, lexicographically poverty-stricken, and phonetically lip-lazy can quite easily be explained by the fact that leadership in Kutenai affairs has passed to the Roman Catholic missionaries, government officials, and white politicians, while prestige has departed from the shamans and chiefs.⁴ Conquest may be cultural rather than military, as one sees today in Scotland where the Scots nobility and gentry rarely understand Gaelic and are far more apt to speak English with an accent more at home in Oxford than north of the Tweed.

The vulgarization of modern Walloon, outside of the theater which writes and plays only comedy these days, is a very real thing. The formerly "noble" dialect has lost its prestige-bearing classes. It has lost the vocabulary of commerce. Under the impact of the factory system, the disappearance of the handicrafts, the entire terminology of which is Walloon, has robbed it of skilled labor. The Brussels-dominated school system is an open enemy, so the minor intellectuals dare not keep its nuances and delicacy alive. Most of the nobility and gentry, those backbones of local speech, have never recovered from the French Revolution or have had to seek commercial jobs in cities. Thus, their refining influence is completely lost. The intellectual elite has turned its back on its past and, unless professionally engaged in nostalgic dialectology, has robbed the dialect of the vocabulary required by the abstractions of philosophy, science, and literature. Despoiled thus of the higher vocabulary requirements and of grammatical precision, one can guess what Walloon's fate is.

The poorest peasant and the least successful unskilled urban worker can retain only enough to serve the purposes of their simple culture, and under the impact of compulsory education they will not retain that. The great fault with this class, however, is not its defection to French entire, but its acceptance of a partial diffusion of French. Hence, neologisms, such as the displacement of *corti*, the true Walloon for garden, by *djardin* (French, *jardin*), exist in the thousands. Even the name of the Redeemer is not immune, for one hears the softening influence of French in *Jèzus* far oftener than he hears the Walloon *Djèzus*.

⁴ H. H. Turney-High, *Ethnography of the Kutenai* ("American Anthropological Association Memoir," No. 56 [Menasha, Wis., 1941]), ch. xiii.

It is clear, then, that the ethnocentric belittling of Walloon is rapidly becoming justified, that it is being vulgarized and bastardized into a true patois, and that even this brogue has a limited future. Only a conqueror's attempt to forbid Walloon will save the language from the linguistic museum.